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STATE FOR SA/INS

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TAGS: [OVIP](#) [PREL](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: MALDIVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER REQUESTS MEETING WITH SECRETARY

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REF: A. COLOMBO 1516
[B](#). COLOMBO 1549
[C](#). STATE 191997

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JEFFREY J. LUNSTEAD. REASON: 1.4 (B,D).

[1](#)1. (U) On September 20 the Embassy received a diplomatic note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Maldives (GORM) advising that Foreign Minister Fathulla Jameel requests a meeting with the Secretary on October 1 "on matters of mutual interest." The

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Foreign Minister will be in Washington to attend IMF and World Bank Board meetings on October 2-3.

[1](#)2. (C/NF) The Secretary met Foreign Minister Jameel in Male' during a brief stop on July 1 during which time Jameel asked to see the Secretary in Washington. (Jameel repeated this request in a brief September 20 meeting with DCM.) The Deputy Secretary met Maldivian PermRep Ambassador Mohamad Latheef in Washington on September 1 (Ref C). We recommend that Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca and/or Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs Donald Camp meet the Foreign Minister, if possible. The Foreign Minister has a reputation as a hardliner and is widely believed to have played a leading role in the GORM's harsh reaction to demonstrations on August 12 and 13 and the continued detention of pro-reform activists, including at least 12 Members of the Special Majlis. A September 16 resolution by the European Parliament condemning the State of Emergency and the detentions (Ref B) has the GORM in full defensive mode. We expect Jameel, who angrily rebuffed a demarche from a visiting delegation of EU Chiefs of Mission on September 6 (Ref A), will offer up the much-repeated official explanation that continuation of the detentions and State of Emergency is necessary to investigate purported links between the reformists and anti-American fundamentalists. A meeting with SA A/S Rocca and/or DAS Camp would provide an important opportunity to re-emphasize U.S. interest in progress toward democratic reform in Maldives, as well as the welfare of the detainees. Suggested talking points follow below. In addition, we should brief Jameel on whatever the status at that time is of Guantanamo detainee Fowzy.

[1](#)3. (C) Suggested Talking Points:

--The U.S. remains concerned that the events of August 12-13 appear to have derailed the promising start toward greater democratic reform indicated in President Gayoom's speech of June 9.

--What plans does GORM have to get this process back on track? When will the Special Majlis meet again? Do you plan to lift the State of Emergency?

--We are concerned that over 70 people remain jailed without charge. Ensuring due process is crucial to respect for human rights. We urge the GORM to provide all detainees with access to legal counsel. If the GORM has evidence that the detainees have committed criminal acts, we urge that charges be brought and the legal process begun as soon as possible.

--We understand your government has decided to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with the ICRC allowing confidential visits to detainees. We commend this decision and urge its expeditious conclusion.

End suggested talking points.
LUNSTEAD